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THE

SOLDIER'S WIDOW,

OR

THE HAPPY RELIEF.

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT,

IN TWO ACTS.

By ARCHIBALD M'LAREN,

*Author of the Coup-de-main; Siege of Perth; Highland Drover; First
Night's Lodging; Old England for ever; Humours of the Times;
Account of the Irish Insurrection; the Negro Slaves;
&c. &c. &c.*

READ 'ERE YOU CONDEMN.

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1800.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN HOPEWELL

STINGY

HEARTWELL

TIMOTHY DROLL

JAMIE HEARTWELL.

NELLY (*the widow*)

POLLY

BETTY.



TO THE PUBLIC.

Some authors have announced their works to the world by an apology something to this *tune*—"Had it not been at the request of some of my best friends this work had never seen the world."—Now, my case is quite the reverse, for it is at the instigation of one of my worst enemies (I mean my poverty) that the world has seen this little production.—Being discharged from the army, in consequence of several wounds received in defence of my king and country, this pamphlet becomes my barn, my shop, my storehouse; in short, my every thing from which I can expect to draw a temporary subsistence for myself and family.—I am proud of having this opportunity of offering my unfeigned thanks to the nobility, gentry, and others, who have either subscribed for, or purchased any of my copies—I feel, but cannot express a due sense of their goodness.

N. B. I have a few copies of the *Negro Slaves*, performed by his Majesty's Servants of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, and at the Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge.

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THE
SOLDIER'S WIDOW.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Before a Country Inn—Sign of the Salutation.

Enter HEARTWELL.

Heartwell.

WELL, here I am safe in port, after all my toil and dangers. Let me see, nineteen years absent—twice taken by the Spaniards, once by the French, and had a narrow escape from the Dutch.—Pretty well, my old boy!—The Spanish Dollars taken from the enemy abroad I am come to spend at home with my friends.

S O N G.

Sometimes a-baft, sometimes a-head,
The unsteady gales of fortune blow,
But British tars ne'er growl nor dread;
For why? becuse, d'ye see we know
That stoutest timbers must wear out;
For life's rude voyage at best is short,
Tho' like Achilles, toss'd about,
Thank heav'n I'm now secure in port.
CHOR. The stoutest timbers, &c.

At reef, or steer, or heave the log,
Not many hands could Tom excell,
And when my messmates slung the grog,
Few British tars cou'd sing so well;
Tho' like a hulk laid up in dock,
I'm come to end my days in peace,
Oft have I stood the dreadful shock
Of roaring guns and raging seas.
CHOR. But stoutest timbers, &c.

Enter

Enter JAMIE and COACHMAN.

Jamie. I tell you, we agreed for two shillings.

Coach. I tell you, master, we agreed for three, and I will have it,

Jamie. You may, if you can catch it.

Heart. Avast, soldier! we all serve one king—Tell me how the land lies, and if you need to hang out a signal of distress, as far as a handful of guineas will go—

Jamie. Sir, as there's nothing in my history that need be conceal'd, I'll gratify your curiosity. A few weeks ago I arrived from Holland—on Saturday last obtained a furlough and a months pay—this morning laid out all my money, except two shillings—

Heart. And so, I suppose, you must put yourself upon short allowance all the rest of your voyage.—Fell in with some little pirate, mayhap?

Jamie. No, sir, I expended my money in paying a debt of friendship due to the memory of a beloved deceased comrade.

Heart. Split my timbers! but I begin to like you.

Jamie. This comrade and I were born in one year—in one village—went to one school—list'd in one regiment—and serv'd in one company. However, in one point we differed—he was married, and I was single. When we had received orders to embark, Nelly, with my little godson, wou'd attend her husband, my comrade Billy, through the dangers of the campaign, for she had no heart to remain behind him—Pardon this tear, sir; for it never fails to attend me whenever I think or speak upon this subject—for some soldiers, though it is their duty to kill the enemies of their king and country, have hearts that can feel for their friends; and I hope you won't think me disloyal, if I had even said their enemies, upon some occasions.

S O N G.

At my right hand when Billy fell,
He cried with weak and falt'ring breath
My orphan boy! my widow'd Nell!—
Then squeez'd my hand, and sunk in death.
I guess'd at what he wou'd have said,
I then swore a sure and solemn oath,
That I wou'd watch with friendly aid,
Th' orphan boy and widow both.

My

My oath with Billy's spirit flew,
 And reach'd the blest realms above,
 Look down, dear friend, and see how true,
 Your faithful Jamie's oath will prove.
 My stock in gold was very small,
 For soldiers seldom hoard much store,
 I gave the weeping widow all,
 And pray'd to heav'n to send her more.

Heart. Where is she now?—my heart and purse shall be open to relieve her.

Jamie. I saw her this morning at a house where Billy and I were formerly quartered; but the landlady's face was chang'd, for Nelly was a widow, and little Henry was a corpse, and she had nothing to defray her expence, for the bundle that contain'd her little effects, fell over board in landing.

Heart. And did'nt my brother sailors——

Jamie. They attempted to recover it, but the sea ran so high——

Heart. I wish I had been there!—Well, little Henry was a corpse—Was'n't so? (*wiping his eyes*)

Jamie. It was, sir—We laid the little image of his father in the grave, and wept, because comrade Billy had nothing now but our tears to prolong his memory; for, with the world, a private soldier's memory dies almost as soon as the report of the shot that kills him.

Heart. Well, but she had no money—How did she clear out from the landlady?

Jamie. I prevailed upon her to accept of all my pay, except two shillings, which I reserved for this coachman.

Heart. Oh, he took you in tow behind—

Jamie. He did; for my feet cou'd not keep pace with my heart's desire, to see a loving girl I left behind.

Coach. He has more money, master.—See that fixpence hanging about his neck.

Jamie. This fixpence I had from Poll at parting—It is suspended by a cord of her filken hair; and has been my companion through all my toil and dangers—I promis'd to bring it home, shou'd I ever return; and wou'd you have me to break my word after having kept it so far?

Heart.

Heart. I wou'd sooner break his neck.—Here, my hearty, take this and give him his shilling, and let him shear off—or shiver my timbers! if I don't make my fist run foul of his bowsprit.—(*Jamie gives the Coachman money, and he goes off*)

Jamie. Sir, for this unexpected kindness—But—I expect my officer through the course of the day, and I hope he'll enable me to repay you.

Heart. Awaft soldier! I'm paid already—The pleasure I take in relieving an honest fellow in distress, is worth ten times the trifle I give you.—Farewell, I must step in and have some refreshment, for it is but early in the morning, and I've stood watch all night. [*goes into the Inn.*]

Jamie. I must endeavour to get some person to convey this letter to Polly, to apprize her of my arrival, and to let my cousin Betty know that the Captain is expected at twelve—Ha! what do I see?—the widow here before me!—poor girl! she's going to her uncle for an answer to the petition she sent him by the post, but I'm afraid she'll meet but a cold reception at Stingy Hall.

[*Exit.*]

ACT I. SCENE II.

Outside of Stingy Hall.

An old fashioned door—the shank bone of a sheep suspended by a cord, which is supposed to pull the bell—pieces of paper pasted on several broken windows—an old dog box before the door—a large elm at a distance.

Enter NELLY in black.

Nelly. They say a woman's heart is brittle, but mine is tough, or it had broke long 'ere now. Every thing I see in the village reminds me of the days that are past. There's the large elm that was won't to shelter my Billy and me from the scorching heat of summer—How bare it looks!—Even like my faded fortune—Not a single leaf left to screen its own branches from the unkindly blast of winter. Every thing is chang'd since I went away—but nothing so much as the unhappy Nelly. This village saw me once a cheerful bride, a happy wife, and a joyful mother—But what am I now?—a wretched widow, and a childless mother.

S O N G.

S O N G.

Tho' my love was a gar'and,
 Of each fragrance that grew,
 I have pluck'd in a far land,
 A sad posie of rue :
 Tho' my life is December,
 Without one cheering ray,
 Yet I still must remember
 The sweet flowers of last May.

Tho' the winter blows chilly,
 'Tis not summer I mourn,
 But I weep for my Billy,
 Who will never return :
 Since my soldier was hurried
 To his cold bed of clay,
 Break my heart and be buried,
 Like the flowers of last May.

Now for my uncle—(*she rings*)

Tim. (*Opens the door, and nods as he sings*) "How do you do? and how do you? and how do you do again?"
 —I suppose you're come for an answer to that petition you sent my master?

Nelly. I am.

Tim. What in the name of poverty cou'd drive you or your petition to Stingy Hall?

Nelly. Necessity.

Tim. Necessity! very fashionable!—Every body has a necessity of some kind or other, now a-days—but it won't do—his heart is lock'd, and I'm afraid you hav'nt got the key to open it.

Nelly. Will you be kind enough to tell him I'm here.

Tim. He knows that already—for he always runs to the window whenever any body pulls at the sheep's foot. Here he comes. Now for a good speech, a plentiful shower of tears, and down upon your marrow-bones. No, no, that will wear out your petticoats, and he'll give you nothing to mend them—not so much as wou'd make a spencer to a flea.

Enter STINGY.

Stin. Well, what do you want?

Nelly. Dear uncle, I told you in my humble petition, how my husband fell in battle, how my little effects were lost in landing, and how my darling infant died upon my journey to see you.

Stin.

Stin. You did so—and what may seem very surprising, I don't in the least thank you for the information.

Nelly. Do not look so cross—Fortune frowns upon me—Do not you frown too—Hunger, cold, thirst, and poverty are at war with me—Ah! do not join such cruel enemies against your friend, your niece, your loving sister's daughter.

Stin. I've caught a bad cold—I must go and roll up my head in a great quantity of flannel.

Nelly. Ah! do not leave me. I have frequently heard my mother tell, that when you were both young, you often said you wou'd relieve her, shou'd she ever happen to be in distress, when you came to be a man—Now she sleeps beyond the reach of earthly ills—Oh! transfer your bounty to me, her daughter—for indeed! indeed! I am distressed and wretched.

S O N G.

I scarce have strength to speak,
I faint, I die for bread,
Was ever wretch so cross?
My loving husband dead:
Alack! and well-a-day!
My little trifles lost,
My infant, too, fell sick,
And died upon the way.
A childless widow made,
Before I saw eighteen,
Ah, sir, some pity take,
Rude blows the blast so keen;
Like it, oh, do not frown,
For your dead sister's sake,
I crave some friendly aid,
But nothing for my own.

Stin. I must go and get the flannels. You need'nt call again—I'm afraid I shan't be at home.

Nelly. Cruel uncle! shou'd I have it in my power to call fifty years hence, do you think you wou'd be at home then?

Stin. Oh, you satirical gypsy! I'm afraid I shall be at my long home before that time.

Nelly. As it may never again be in my power to ask, or your's to grant a favor—

Stin. I cou'd find in my heart—(*feeling his pocket*)
—Oh! but I can't find it in my pocket, without changing.—

changing.—(*a struggle in his mind*)—Shall I, or shall I not?—Come, come, its but once and away with it—the more extravagant now, the more saving another time. Here, now, and let me see that you take care—(*Offering money*)—But stop! stop! (*drawing back*) I've made a mistake. Adad! her whining had very nigh betray'd me into a foolish action; but thanks to my prudence, I just recovered myself before she had time to snap it. You see, girl, I'm willing to serve you—very willing—but this piece of money may save my life, when all my kindred won't—it's a good friend, and it wou'd be very distressing to part with a good friend.

Nelly. Alas, sir, I know it feelingly—I have parted with my best friend, never to see him again—not even to trace him in the features of his beloved, buried offspring.

Stin. That may be all very true and very pretty, and yet, notwithstanding, I must go and bury my head in flannel. [*Exit.*]

Nelly. Unfeeling man!—Timothy, does your uncle the pawnbroker, live in the next town yet?

Tim. What! old John?—Every body knew old John; and so they might, for I believe few men in the country ever lent more money to people in distress.

Nelly. I have reserved my wedding ring for the last shift—I once thought never to have parted with it, but with my life; but find now that I must pledge it for a trifle, till heav'n enables me to redeem it.

Tim. Let me see it.—Faith it is gold!—I thought that it had only been a twopenny hoop.—You say you're in distress—Poor woman!—Well, I don't actually say that I can raise you any solid money upon this bauble; but as you're in distress, I'll tell you what I'll do.

Nelly. What? my good Timothy—what?

Tim. As I'm acquainted with Mrs. Scorewell, at the Salutation, I'll speak to her to let you have as much liquor—

Nelly. I can't drink liquor.

Tim. Never mind that; I'll help you, as you're in distress. Did you ever hear the song made upon my uncle John and his darling Kate?

S O N G.

S O N G.

Young Johnny lov'd his darling Kate,
 And they at length were married,
 For two short months their joys were great,
 But long e're three miscarried ;
 For John wou'd have a cheering glass,
 Tho' he shou'd steal or borrow,
 And Kitty chang'd her smiling face,
 To sullen glooms and sorrow.

For the kind words they us'd of late,
 Whene'er fond John was mellow,
 He call'd sweet Kate a saucy slut,
 And she call'd him rude fellow :
 From these kind words, they fell to blows,
 The late bridegroom and bride O,
 Sweet Kitty scratch'd fond Johnny's nose,
 Fond Jonny tann'd her hide O.

But if its true what now we're told,
 They neither fight nor quarrel,
 For she's forgot the way to scold,
 And he's forsook the barrel ;
 Kind reader, now to give applause,
 I pray be not too hurried,
 For all this change was wrought because——
 Because they both are buried.

Nelly. Dead!—Even there my hopes fail me, and my landlady won't believe my ring is gold, because I'm poor. (*going*)

Tim. Come back.—Are'nt you a soldier's widow?

Nelly. To my sorrow, I am.

Tim. Oh, you're a happy woman! you're a happy woman!—I wish I was a soldier's widow!—Look at this and smile! (*shewing a paper*) There's benevolence and philanthropy!—A number of good noble souls have constituted a fund for the relief of poor soldier's widows—Though your uncle is an old stingy, good for nothing, you see there's generosity, honor, and humanity in old England, my girl—Take this and go to Mr. Worthy, the agent.

Nelly. Heaven blefs them!—May they never know any thing of distress, but the pleasure that arises from relieving it.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT

ACT I. SCENE III.

Before the Inn—Enter HEARTWELL meeting CAPTAIN.

Heart. (*rubbing his eyes*) Eh!—what!—can I believe my eyes!—It is! it is him!—What cheer? what cheer, Captain?—Did I ever think to see you in England, when you and I were brother prisoners in the land of frogs.

Capt. Mr. Heartwell, I'm happy to see you.

Heart. I'll tell you what, messmate, I'm cruizing about here for intelligence. In my youth I left a young chip of my own in this neighbourhood, but can hear nothing of him. To be sure, the landlady tells me as how his mother, poor girl, has scor'd off the debt she owed to nature, which puts it out of my power to score off the debt of justice I ow'd to her—An old father prevented our union.

Capt. Mr. Heartwell, I am upon a piece of private business myself—Do you see that house?

Heart. What, old brother Stingy's?

Capt. Your brother!

Heart. Yes, my half brother; but tho' this is Christmas-day, if I was to call, I suppose he wou'd grudge me a meal of victuals; so I'll send him this packet, containing drafts for so many French livres, to buy a Christmas dinner—If you'll be of my mess, we'll drop in at meal-time, and tell him who sent it.

Capt. Excuse me, Mr. Heartwell—I see a person I wish to speak to. (*Jamie passing behind*)

Heart. As welcome as the flowers in May, Captain—But how shall I send this packet?—Oh, here comes a pretty little tight thing, just cut out for a packet boat. Halloo! my tight one, are you willing to earn a fixpence? *Enter Nelly*)

Nelly. Yes, sir, in an honest way.

Heart. Honest way! strike my topfails! do I look like one that wou'd mean any thing else?

Nelly. I don't say you do.

Heart. You had better not.—Take this, and leave it at old Stingy's, but don't mention my name.

Nelly. It wou'd be hard for me, for I don't know it.

B

Heart.

Heart. That's right—the best security we can have for some women's secrecy, is their not knowing any thing.

A I R.

Heart. Will you earn a crooked sixpence ?

Nelly. Yes, sir, in an honest way,

Heart. That will help to bear your expence,

Nelly. Heav'n bless you, sir, I pray.

Heart. Go, my girl, and give the letter,
Never mention whence it came.

Nelly. That wou'd be no easy matter,
For I do not know your name.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Room in Stingy Hall.

STINGY, with a packet unopened—TIMOTHY attending.

Stin. (reads) "To Richard Stingy, Esq. of Stingy Hall." Who brought this?

Tim. Your niece, sir.

Stin. Timothy, I can't afford to be in a passion, my constitution won't stand it, or else I wou'd give you a thundering scolding.

Tim. Never be in a passion, sir. My great grandfather, of crabbed memory, was a very passionate man, as hot as a pepper-corn; but he was'nt above three days in his grave, till he was as cool as a cucumber.

Stin. You know I ordered you never to receive any petitions. Go and return it—Or stop!—bring it back—it will serve to light the fire, or paste up the windows you broke with your carelessness.

Tim. So it will, sir—then I shan't need to pay for new ones.

Stin. Who told you so?—And do you think I'll wrong the poor woman, for your advantage?—Go and return it—No, stop!—that will encourage her to come again—Hand it here, and I'll put it in the fire.

Tim. Oh, for shame, sir—if you do her no good, do her no harm—poor devil, she's drown'd in distress.

Stin. And that's the very reason I wou'd avoid her ;
for

for the man who ventures into the water to save a person drowning in distress, very often sinks himself. Take care of number one, that's the motto that belongs to Stingy Hall. Tell her never to come again, or I'll perhaps use her worse—many one wou'd do it for coming a second time.

Tim. And many one wou'd use her better too—If you follow any example, let it be that of generosity, rather than—

Stin. Follow your nose out of the room, or else this foot shall follow—

Tim. The other. Yes, he has one foot in the grave, and the other is following. Come, sir, do one generous action, and leave a good name behind you.

Stin. Get out of the room—

Tim. Do it to procure you a kind welcome where you are going.

Stin. How can you keep the poor woman waiting, you unfeeling rascal?—Give her the papers and turn her about her business—let her walk her pumps.

Tim. Her pumps!—Ah, poor woman! poor woman! she may go long enough without pumps, or shoes either, who has to skin a flint for the leather. [Exit.

Stin. Why shou'd I be troubled with other people's affairs?—No man upon earth takes more care of his purse and person than I do. When I'm in town, I'm afraid to walk the pavement, for fear a house shou'd tumble down upon me; and I'm not fond of the middle of the street, lest I shou'd be run down by a carriage—I seldom trust a bridge, for fear it shou'd fall; and I never venture into a boat, lest it shou'd sink—I never eat too much, for fear of a surfeit; and I'm afraid to eat too little, for fear I shou'd starve—and yet, notwithstanding all my regularity, I find that that vile highwayman, *Time*, has robb'd me of a great deal of my bloom and vigour.

S O N G.

Dear me! how I'm alter'd from wha' I have been,
When I was young Dickey that tripp'd on the green,
I had mirth at my heart, I had youth on my brow,
But never a mirth nor youth have I now.

At balls and assemblies, no doubt, I was there,
Envied by the men, and admired by the fair,
If I ask'd but one kiss, I was sure to get two,
But never a one will kiss me now.

Wherever

Wherever I past by, the misses wou'd gaze,
And women of sixty have sung out my praise —
"Dear me! but he's handsome and charming. I vow;"
But never a one will look at me now.

For want of a helpmate, no comfort I have,
No children to weep when I'm laid in my grave,
My heirs are impatient to lay me down low,
For never a copper they'll get from me now.

[Exit:

ACT II. SCENE II.

A Room in the Salutation. TIMOTHY with a pot of ale before him.

Tim (calling to boy) Young one!—bring me a pipe of tobacco; and if Jamie Heartwell calls, tell him I'm here.

Enter HEARTWELL

Heart. What Jamie Heartwell?

Tim. Old Stingy's nephew, master, come from the regiment.

Heart. Is he a foldier? (*hastily*)

Tim. To be sure—How cou'd he help it, poor lad?—his uncle would do nothing for him; and as for the old reprobate, his father—

Heart. You lie—No you don't—I am a reprobate—Thank you for abusing me. Where is he?

Tim. He's gone to procure some relief for a foldier's widow, from Mr. Worthy.

Heart. Yes! it was my boy that came in tow!—it was my boy that help'd the foldier's widow!—a chip of the old block!—a chip of the block!—Toll loll de roll doll (*dances and capers*)

Tim. (looking at him a long time) Very well, old one! if you're for a little merriment, as these are Christmas times, I don't care if I join you. (*gets up, and dances with him*)

D U E T.

Heart. 'Sblood! was ever man so happy?
I have found my darling boy!

Tim. Come, sir, take a little droppie — (*offering tankard*)

Heart. No, you rogue, I'm drunk with joy.

Tim. Are you? Boy begin your scoring, (*to boy*)

Heart. We shall dance and sing and play,

Tim. Sure we have a right for roaring,

For to-morrow's boxing day.

dance off.)

CHOR. 'Sblood was ever man so happy. (*they*)

ACT

ACT II. SCENE III.*An Orchard. Enter POLLY and BETTY.*

Polly. Oh, dear! I never was so happy!—both of them come!—we shall have an illumination!

Betty. Se we shall, Polly!

S O N G.

Betty. Altho' no candles transcient blaze,
My windows shall adorn,
My eyes illum'd by gladness' rays,
Shall blaze for his return.

Polly. Altho' no bell goes ding, dong, ding,
Altho' no bonfires burn,

Betty. My heart shall glow, my ears shall ring,
With joy for his return.

CHOR. Altho' no candles, &c.

Betty. Then what is all external shew?

Polly. The weak efforts of art,
Compar'd to love's unfeigned glow,
That 'luminates the heart.

Betty. Let friends or foes my love deride,
Let fortune smile or frown,

My faithfu' arms shall open wide,
And clasp him as their own.

CHOR. Altho' no candles, &c.

Polly. As I'm a living longing lover, here they come!

Enter CAPTAIN and JAMIE.

Betty. My dear Hopewell!

Polly. My sweet Heartwell!—Did you ever dream of me, my Jamie?

Jamie. Not so often as I cou'd have wish'd, for I seldom slept, my Polly.

Betty. Did you receive my letter, my Hopewell?

Capt. I did, just as we were marching up to the battle; but had only time to look at your sweet name, and kiss it.

Betty. Was the battle soon over?

Capt. Not till night. I put the dear epistle in my bosom, for I cou'd not see to read it.—Believe me, I never long'd so much for morning light, my Betty.

S O N G.

S O N G.

When the loud cannon's dreadful breath,
 In clouds of fire and smoke broke out,
 When the rude messengers of death
 On fatal errands flew about,
 Great Britain's sons afraid of nought,
 Although with dangers hard beset,
 For still we fought, and still I thought
 On thee, my bonny smiling Bett.

CHOR. Oh, my bonny, bonny smiling Bett,
 Although with dangers hard beset,
 Yet still we fought, and still I thought
 On thee, my bonny smiling Bett.

Our troops drawn up in awful line,
 Sometime before we fir'd a shot,
 I thus address'd a friend of mine,
 The brave and noble captain stout—
 "Dear comrade, shou'd I fall to-day,
 Take you this ring with diamonds set,
 If you survive, the toy convey
 To England's shore, and weeping Bett,
 CHOR. Oh, my bonny, &c.

Tho' many fell th't fatal day,
 As in such fray, some always must,
 (Forgive this tear, 'twill force it's way)
 For my dear comrades laid in dust.
 Nor French nor Dutch my life cou'd touch,
 For 'twas the kind decree of fate,
 That I shou'd come, all dangers from,
 To wed my bonny smiling Bett.
 CHOR. Oh, my bonny, &c.

What num'rous ills debarr'd our way,
 No force of language can recount,
 Events, no wisdom cou'd forsee,
 Sad ills, no valour cou'd surmount.
 What men cou'd do, our troops atchiev'd,
 But who can guide the hand of fate?
 From toil and danger now reliev'd,
 I'm come to smile with bonny Bett.
 CHOR. Oh, my bonny, &c.

Now, my dear Bett, are you willing to trust your person
 with your faithful soldier?

Betty. What, and leave my fortune behind me?

Capt. The law will soon put you in possession—

Betty. Here comes my uncle!—What shall we do?

Capt.

Capt. I'll keep him in play with some nonsense or other till the coachman arrives, then we'll set off.

Enter STINGY and TIMOTHY.

Stin. Yes, yes; I've order'd Deborah to kill the old black hen; and yet it's a pity, for I had some thoughts of setting her down to hatch in the spring. Well, it's a mercy Christmas comes but once a year. Bless my eye-sight! what do I see? the fox among my poultry!—Pray, now, good Mr. Reynard, which of these chickens do your teeth water for?—In plain English, what do you want here, sir?

Capt. In plain English, I want you.

Stin. Well, sir, here I am—now to your business.

Capt. Mr. Stingy! Mr. Stingy!—I say Mr. Stingy!

Stin. Well, sir, what do you say to Mr. Stingy?

Capt. I say it was rude to affront a gentleman, and mean to decline giving satisfaction.

Stin. Satisfaction!—For what?

Capt. Come, come, Mr. Stingy; you know very well how you came to me last night in my dream, and insisted upon fighting me, if I did not marry this lady.

Stin. In your dream! ha! ha! ha! this is either a rogue or a fool; or probably part of both.

Capt. And you remember I also dream'd that you wish'd for a pair of pistols—here they are; take your choice.

Stin. Some bedlamite broke out. (*aside*)—Well, sir, if I must fight, you'll let me send for a second. Timothy, go and tell William the constable to come here; I'll have this fellow taken up. Rogue or fool, no matter which. (*aside to Timothy*)

Capt. Are you ready, sir?

Stin. I must entertain him with some cock and a bull story, till the constable comes. (*aside*)

Capt. Take your pistol.—Plague on that coachman.

Stin. This is a very curious story, sir. When I was going to be an officer—keep away the muzzle!—ha! ha! ha! the taylor brought home my regimentals—I'm afraid she's cock'd—When I saw the colour—take care she may go off—I felt a squeamishness at my heart;

heart: so I thought it better—to decline than resign
—Shame on that constable. (*aside*)

Capt. I cou'd murder the coachman for staying so long. (*aside*)—Shall I measure the ground, fir?

Stin. Are you fond of singing, fir?—These girls have the prettiest pair of pipes—Come, girls, cou'dnt you divert this gentleman with some song or Christmas carol?

Betty. What song wou'd you have, fir?

Stin. That one you sung last night, when Timothy dropt the poker on my toes, and set me a cursing.

A I R.

Betty and Polly.

The raging storm awhile may roar,
To shake and bend the yielding reeds,
But when the furious blast is o'er,
They raise again their drooping heads;
So does the maid sunk in despair,
If to her wishes rais'd at last,
Forget her sorrows and her care,
And smile at all her troubles past.

Captain and Jamie.

The advent'rous youth who braves the war,
And leaves his darling love behind,
In quest of fame, may travel far,
Encount'ring harms of various kind;
But when return'd, in peace secure,
If the dear maid will deign to smile,
Each tender glance will prove a cure,
For all his dangers, scars, and toil.

Capt. But I beg ten thousand pardons, fir.

Stin. For what?

Capt. For delaying the duel so long—I see you're quite impatient to begin.

Stin. Oh, fie, no—Take your time—take your time.

Capt. I say you are—I see your passion breaking out in your left eye, and it will soon infect the other.

Enter HEARTWELL.

Heart. Aye, there he is—Yes, yes, a chip of the old block.—I won't discover myself yet.—What cheer? what cheer, old Stingy?—Don't you know me?

Stin. No—and I don't want to know you, till you learn better manners.—Old Stingy!

Heart.

Heart. Put on your spectacles—up with your bow-lights.—Now, do you know old Tom Heartwell, your half-brother, return'd with a heavy cargo of dollars.

Stin. Half brother Tom, you're welcome to Stingy Hall; and so are your dollars. (*shaking hands*)

Heart. Brother Stingy, is the dinner ready?

Stin. Not quite; but I believe Deborah is plucking the old black hen in the kitchen.

Heart. Old black hen! shiver my timbers! cou'd you afford nothing better out of what I sent you?

Stin. What did you send me?

Heart. Something handsome for a Christmas dinner.

Stin. What was it, half-brother Tom?

Heart. A draft for so many livres, brother Stingy

Stin. What the plague! do you think I wou'd dine upon livers on Christmas day?

Heart. Livers!—ha! ha! ha!—I sent you an order for so much money.

Stin. Who did you send it by, brother Tom?

Heart. A pretty little tight girl, in black.

Stin. Oh lud! oh dear! oh! I'm afraid that was the packet I mistook for a petition from my niece.

Heart. And where is it?

Stin. I order'd Timothy to return it.

Heart. Return it! shiver my timbers! if ever you shall return another. Captain, I'm afraid we shall have a banyan day—no dinner for us here.

Capt. I cou'd feast for ever on this lady's charms—

Stin. The charms of her fortune, you mean, if you had it—but I'll take care you shan't.

Heart. But I'll take care he shall!

Betty. Sir, if there's as much law—

Capt. He shall give up his usurp'd authority.

Stin. Very well, good people! if you take her fortune, don't think I'll contend for her person—No, no, let the shell follow the kernal; that's one of the maxims of Stingy Hall.

Heart. So, brother Dick, you took fine care of my son.

Stin. Near as much as you did yourself, half-brother Tom.

Heart. The reproof is just.—My dear boy! from this day—(*embracing him*)

Jamie.

Jamie What ! is my benefactor my father ?

Heart. Yes—a father who will load you with dollars, my dear chip of the old block.

Stin. Yes: and he'll prove a true chip of the old block—head I shou'd have added ; for he'll make your dollars fly like the feathers of my old black hen.

Enter NELLY.

Nelly. Sir, here's your packet—I shou'd have brought it sooner, only that I had to wait upon Mr. Worthy, the agent for relieving soldier's widows. Heaven bleis the donors!—My Billy (if spirits are sensible of earthly transactions) will look down and thank them for their liberality to his unhappy widow.

Heart. Poor girl ! I promis'd to relieve her ; and I never like to break my word—A vast, yes I do—When in the heat of passion, I promise to do a foolish or revengeful action, I always break my promise. Keep the packet my girl—'tis but a trifle. Many times have I spent more with my bottle companions, to put me in spirits—but shiver my timbers ! if I think that all the liquor in England cou'd raise such an agreeable glow about my heart, as I feel at this instant, from a sense of having relieved a fellow-creature out of the clutches of poverty and distress.

Capt. Come, Nelly, my mite must be added, to remove the wants of my fellow-campaigner. (*gives money*)

Nelly. I thank you, sir !—Every body is kind to me ! I met several ladies in the village, emulous to alleviate my distress. (*looking at the money*)—Had I my Billy and my little Henry now to partake of your different bounties—oh ! I shou'd be so happy—But they are gone ! and what is all the wealth on earth to the unhappy Nelly ?—But pardon me, tho' grief must suppress every emotion of joy in this dreary bosom, yet think me not insensible of your goodness—Witness these tears ; they are the messengers of gratitude, deputed by an overflowing heart, to thank you.

Capt. Dry your tears.

Nelly. Where the grateful tears of the widow and the orphan fall, may twenty thousand blessings spring.

Betty. Why didn't you write to me, cousin ?

Nelly. I did : but I fear my letter has been miscarried.

Stin.

Sting. No, no; here it is. (*shewing a letter*)—Every thing directed to Stingy Hall, I claim as my property—so give me the livres. (*snatching at the paper*)

Heart. By no means, brother Stingy!—'Twill never be said that old Tom Heartwell ventured his life to fill the coffers of a miser. You shall never return another packet of mine, brother Siingy.

Jamie. (*introducing Polly*) Sir, here's one who wou'd be happy—

Heart. To call me father—is'nt so?—Take her, my dear chip—My blessing and my dollars be with you both. (*joining their hands*)

Jamie. Sir, this is so generous an action—

Heart. Avaft, young man!—I must do a few generous actions in my old age, to atone for many foolish ones committed in my youth. A bad action gives double trouble—We have first to commit it, and afterwards repent for it—but a good one is a kind of true blue, that never stains. The recollection of it will not only smoothe your passage through life, but when the sexton has stowed your body under his hatches, I have a notion that when your spirit mounts aloft, it will even meet you there. What say you, brother Stingy.

Stin. It has always been my maxim to take care of number one—

Enter TIMOTHY.

Where's the constable?

Tim. He's drinking with the coachman who brought this gentleman—but let it be your consolation, they're drinking none of your's.

Stin. Rascal!—I'll turn you off to-morrow morning

Tim. No, you shan't—I'll turn myself off to-night—. How do you like that for your Christmas box, old Mr. Givenothing?

Stin. I see every body here has an eye to number one—Can I by no means convert this job to my advantage? Young gentleman, if you marry my niece, you must make yourself useful to the uncle; for, believe me, I wou'd'nt bring even a cat to Stingy Hall, but with a view to catch a mouse. The people in the neighbourhood have taken into their heads to ridicule my prudent way of living—if they continue their fleers, as you're a
soldier

foldier, you'll challenge them.—No matter to them, whether you or I fight, as it will be all in the family.

Capt. Sir, though fighting is my profession, I am so far from wishing to wage war with my friends, that I look forward with pleasure to the happy period that shall conclude a sure and honorable peace with all our enemies.

FINALE.

Capt. Let peace and plenty bless our isle,
Jamie. Let war and discord ever fly,
Betty. The tear-stain'd cheek again shall smile,
Polly. And gladness shine in every eye ;
Tim. Let mutual interest join our hands,
Jamie. Let friendly love unite our hearts,
Heart. Let wealth flow in from distant lands,
 And genius cultivate the arts.
 CHOR. Let peace and plenty, &c.

Capt. Let all our youths be stout and brave,
Betty. Let all our maids be chaste and fair,
Stingy. Let all our spendthrifts learn to save,
Nelly. And helpless widows not despair ;
Capt. Let king and subjects live in love,
Tim. Let thirsty souls ne'er want a drink,
Betty. Let all our words soft music prove,
Polly. And all our actions sweetly clink.
 CHOR. Let peace and plenty, &c.



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